

Coins

Canadian cent: New design and new size

By Roger Boye

THE CANADIAN cent will shrink in size starting next January, and the "tails" side will get a new design.

At present, without looking at the design, it's impossible to distinguish Canadian cents (which circulate in the United States) from those made in this country. Both coins are identical in size and nearly the same in metal composition.

In 1978, the diameter of the Canadian cent will be reduced to 16 millimeters, making it slightly smaller and lighter than the U.S. dime. Administrators of the Royal Canadian Mint say they are making the change because the cost of producing each cent this year exceeds the value of the coin.

Although it's not quite as expensive for the U.S. government to make cents (about \$7 for a thousand pennies), the cost could rise dramatically if the price of copper returns to its \$1.20 a pound level of 1974. Currently, U.S. Treasury executives are deciding whether to endorse rec-

ommendations that the cent be eliminated from the U.S. coinage system. If the cent doesn't disappear from circulation in the next couple of years, it's likely that the metal composition or size of the coin will change.

Some congressional committees are expected to conduct hearings early next year on possible changes in the U.S. coinage system. Meanwhile, collectors of Canadian coins will have to buy new folders to house their 1978 cents.

THE ONLY Chicago-area resident running for election to the American Numismatic Association's Board of Governors, Paul R. Whitnah, was ninth among 19 candidates, but that wasn't good enough for election to the board.

The top seven vote-getters won board seats. Whitnah, 30, of Hoffman Estates, had 4,400 votes while the seventh-place candidate (Kurt R. Krueger of Kimberly, Wis.) had 4,664. The results were announced at the ANA convention last month in Atlanta.

OUTGOING ANA board member Glenn B. Smedley of La Grange Park, who did not run for re-election, has a new job: ANA public relations director.

"I sought the job. I sincerely believe the ANA needs to do a much better job in selling itself to collectors," Smedley said.

Membership in the ANA, the nation's largest organization of coin collectors, dropped about one per cent last year to approximately 31,000 members. Smedley, who has been active for many years in Chicago-area coin clubs, wants to take a positive approach in correcting this problem.

"Some persons attribute the decline (in membership) to general economic conditions, but collectors won't join the ANA if they don't know what it's all about," he said.

Smedley and his wife are deciding whether to move permanently to Colorado Springs where the ANA headquarters is located.